



7

STICKY FAITH EVERY DAY

Week 7: Lose

Daily Guide

LOSE

Sticky Faith Every Day Daily Guide

Notice the moment

Our bodies require constant cycles of filling and emptying, living and dying, gaining and losing—we just aren't always aware of them.

We're usually aware of the digestion process, but we don't often pay attention to many of the other daily cycles. Every day we lose and re-grow hair. We constantly shed and build new skin cells, blood cells, and most other kinds of cells. Our body is constantly gaining and losing. We just don't notice.

Today you'll notice your breathing, connecting it to the idea of gaining and losing.

Think of it like this: you need to fill your lungs with oxygen several times each minute, but you can't fill them if they are still full with your last breath. In order to gain your next breath (and stay alive) you need to lose your last breath. This is often how life is, and as we think this week about how Jesus lost and regained his life, we can experience it better if we notice the constant cycle of breathing.

Did you know that most of us don't breathe properly?

Optimal breathing is done with the diaphragm (so that your abdomen moves out as you inhale and in as you exhale) at a rate of about 6-8 breaths per minute. Most of us breathe shallowly and rapidly through our chest and shoulders, which doesn't provide the best amount of oxygen to our brain and body.

Try this breathing exercise and as you do it, think of Christ's death as a cosmic, divine exhale of loss and think of his resurrection as a cosmic, divine inhale of new life.

Things I'm Noticing

1. Find a quiet place to sit up straight with your feet flat on the floor.
2. Notice your breathing. What does it feel like to take air into your lungs? What does it feel like to exhale?
3. Now focus on breathing with your diaphragm (place your hand on your stomach—it should be moving in and out).
4. Finally, begin to notice the pace of your breathing. It should take about 5-7 seconds to inhale and about the same to exhale.
5. Do this for a couple of minutes. (Remember, this should feel comfortable, so if it's not, just relax and breathe at your normal pace again for a few moments.)

What was it like to breathe this way? How does noticing your breathing help you focus on the weight of Christ's death and resurrection?

Notice God's Word

Through the centuries, Christians have combined breathing patterns with reading scripture or praying. Often this is done with the psalms.

Today you can try it out with a paraphrased passage from Job 1:21. Job was a character in scripture who lost everything and felt as if he was about to lose his life.

As you read the italicized lines, inhale slowly; as you read the bold lines, exhale slowly. You can repeat this practice several times.

Naked I came into this world

Naked I will depart

God has given

God has taken away

Blessed be God's name

Blessed be God's name

Things I'm Noticing

Notice God

Each breath that you've taken today—and every other breath you have ever taken—is a gift from God.

In Genesis 2:7, the creation of the first human is described like this: "Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." One of God's first acts of love towards us is to give us life through breathing. Breath is our first experience of God's grace—it is not something we earn or deserve from God, it is something God gives to us out of goodness and love.

Someday you'll take your last breath, and you don't know when that day will be. This week, become more aware of your breathing as a cycle of life and death, gaining and losing, every day.

Notice this week

- There is a lot of science and research behind breathing rates. If you're interested in finding out more about optimal breathing rates, talk to your doctor or do some studying. There are several apps for computers or smartphones that will help you become aware of your breathing pace. (Note: talk to your doctor or your parents before taking medical advice from apps, websites or others.)
- Try pacing your breathing with some other scripture passages like Psalm 46:10, Psalm 131, or Romans 8:38-39.
- One of the most common "breath prayers" is called the "Jesus prayer":

**Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.**

Or sometimes it's shortened to just,
"Lord Jesus, have mercy on me."

Try saying this prayer as you breathe in and out, or while walking, running, or driving this week.

Things I'm Noticing

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STICKY FAITH EVERY DAY



Week 7: Lose

Family Ideas

LOSE

Sticky Faith Every Day Family Ideas

If we want to experience the fullness of life God offers through Jesus every day, we must be willing to lose everything as Jesus did.

This week, experiment with one or more of these ideas as a family to help you process and learn together about what it means to experience loss.

Ideas for Engaging Your Whole Family in LOSE

- **Talk about a recent loss.** Some families participating with this curriculum will have no problem talking about loss. Perhaps you just experienced the loss of a loved one, a broken relationship, or the loss of a job or a house. Talk about it and compare your feeling to how God must have felt when Jesus died or to how Jesus may have felt as he realized everyone had abandoned him. End by reading Psalm 131 together. Here's the whole thing:

My heart is not proud, LORD, my eyes are not haughty;
I do not concern myself with great matters or things too wonderful for me.
But I have calmed myself and quieted my ambitions.
I am like a weaned child with its mother; like a weaned child I am content.
Israel, put your hope in the LORD both now and forevermore.

- **Practice breathing together.** Breathing is a natural pattern of gaining (inhaling) and losing (exhaling). Just as there is no way to gain the joy of Easter Sunday without experiencing the loss of Good Friday, there is no way to fill our lungs without first emptying them. Being aware of our breathing is a way of connecting our everyday lives to the story of crucifixion and resurrection. Choose one person in your family to be the "counter" while everyone else breathes along. [Say something like, "Inhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6; Exhale, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6."] After a few minutes, talk about what you noticed. How does your pace of breathing reflect your normal pace of life? What do you wish were different? You might want to incorporate a prayer practice from the DAILY GUIDE involving pacing our breathing alongside scripture in prayer.
- **Parents, talk about losses in your life.** Some kids haven't experienced much loss in their lifetime. This would be a good week to take time for parents to share their experiences of loss, suffering and pain with their kids.

- **Read the four accounts of Jesus' death.** As you read, notice how they are different from each other and discuss why each author may have wanted to emphasize different parts of their experience.
- **Encourage each other.** Loss is a part of life and of following Jesus, but it's not the end of the story. Maybe your family can repeat this phrase (or one like it) to each other all week to remind each other that even though life can be hard, we can still have hope:

"It's Friday, but Sunday's coming."

IF YOU'RE DOING THIS SERIES DURING LENT...

- **Go to a Thursday Passover/Last Supper service as a family** or create your own reminder at home on this evening when Jesus shared his last meal with friends and talked about how his loss would usher in the new Kingdom. John 13-17 gives the most extensive account of the Last Supper and final words of Jesus to his friends, but you could read any Gospel account together.
- **Go to a Good Friday service as a family.** Add something to your experience like riding to and from the service in complete silence, fasting until after the service, or journaling and sharing your experience of the service.